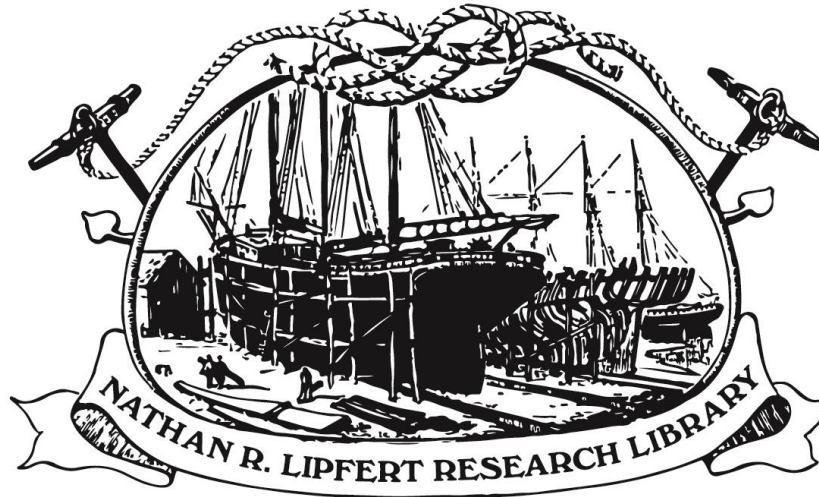


**Maine Maritime Museum Library**  
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**Inventory for  
Manuscript Collection  
MS - 344**

**Olive Titcomb Pote Papers**

**1857-1858**

by  
Elisabeth Meier  
January 2020

½ box  
0.2 linear feet  
Accession no. 2001.84.5

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## Abstract

### Pote, Olive Titcomb

#### Olive Titcomb Pote Papers

MS-344

1857-1858

½ box

Captain's wife from Portland, Maine

This collection contains original, photocopied, and transcribed letters and a journal, all written by Olive Titcomb Pote on a voyage from Havana to Valparaiso, Callao, and the Chincha Islands on the bark *Dorcas C. Yeaton*. These provide a detailed record of the social and material world of a Maine ship captains' wife, as well as observations on the ports visited, the guano industry, and international diplomacy.

In English.

Gift of Helen K. Titcomb

Accession No. 2001.84.5

Finding aid available in repository and online, folder level control.

Preferred Citation: Olive Titcomb Pote Papers (MS-344). Maine Maritime Museum

#### Added entries—persons:

Pote, Olive Titcomb (1826-1862)

Pote, Samuel, Captain (b. circa 1815)

#### Added entries—corporate bodies (including vessels):

*Dorcas C. Yeaton* (bark)

#### Added entries—key terms:

Diplomacy

Guano

Maritime law

Ship captains

Ship captains' spouses

Ships--cabins

West Indies trade

#### Added entries—places:

Callao (Callao, Peru)

Chincha Islands (Peru)

Havana (Cuba)

Lima (Peru)

Valparaiso (Chile)

## Acquisition

This collection was donated to Maine Maritime Museum by Helen K. Titcomb, a descendent of Olive Titcomb Pote's family.

Helen K. Titcomb; Gift; 2001; 2001.84.5

### **Access Restrictions**

There are no restrictions on this collection.

### **Physical Condition**

The papers are in good condition.

### **Processing Notes**

This collection contains handwritten letters, photocopies, and transcriptions. As the latter two categories contain material not represented in the original letters at Maine Maritime Museum, they have been left in this collection. The location of the journal and any other photocopied letters is not currently known.

### **Related Materials**

These letters were donated with a number of items related to Olive Titcomb Pote, namely, a portrait of Olive (2001.84.1), a portrait locket, brooch, and pin (2001.84.2-4), and ten navigational charts in a wooden chest that belonged to Olive's father, Samuel Titcomb (2001.84.6-7).

### **Historical Note**

Olive Titcomb Pote (1826-1862) was the daughter of Captain Samuel and Elizabeth (Thompson) Titcomb of Falmouth, Maine. She had three siblings: Elbridge (b. 1821); Samuel C. (1828-1854), a sailor; and Holmes Boardman (1835-1865), a music teacher. After Olive's father, Samuel, died of yellow fever in 1854 on a trip to Cuba, her mother and brother Holmes ("Boardie") moved to Portland, where Olive also lived.

Olive Titcomb married Captain Samuel Pote (b. c.1815), also of Falmouth. Olive accompanied him on at least one voyage, a trip from Havana to Valparaíso, Callao and the Chincha Islands aboard the bark *Dorcas C. Yeaton* in 1857 and 1858. On this voyage, the Potes became party to a minor diplomatic incident when the Peruvian gunboat *Tumbes* detained the *Dorcas C. Yeaton* on its way to the Chincha Islands for a load of guano.

Olive Titcomb Pote died in Portland in 1862. After her death, Samuel Pote remarried and continued his seafaring career into the 1880s, commanding, among others, the bark *C. G. Hamilton* and ship *G. C. Chapman*, both of Portland.

### **Scope and Content Note**

This collection contains letters written by Olive Titcomb Pote to her family and friends in Portland during her voyage to Cuba, Chile, and Peru in 1857-1858. It starts with her account of a passage to Cuba to join her husband, Samuel, aboard his bark, the *Dorcas C. Yeaton*. It continues with descriptions of Pote's experiences in Havana, Valparaíso, Callao, Lima, and the

Chincha Islands, as well as life at sea. Pote's observations focus on her social life in port and the networks of captains and captains' wives she encountered, visits ashore, observations on the crew and cabin life, events at sea, including the *Dorcas C. Yeaton*'s detention by and subsequent negotiations with the Peruvian government, and the details of loading guano in the Chincha Islands.

The collection also contains a set of photocopies and transcriptions of Pote's letters, along with transcriptions of the journal that she kept between Havana and Valparaiso. The original journal and some of the transcribed letters are not part of this collection, so the transcriptions provide significantly more detail about Olive's experiences at sea.

### **Box and Folder List**

Box	Folder	
1	1	Letters from Olive Titcomb Pote to friends and family, 1857-1858
	2	Photocopies of letters from Olive Titcomb Pote, 1857-1858
	3	Transcription of letters and journal, Olive Titcomb Pote, 1857-1858